

End of Year Celebration held for DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation's Youth Conservation Corps

FELTON –Fifty-eight Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) members spent 14,000 hours this summer in DNREC's Delaware State Parks removing hundreds of acres of invasive plants, cleaning, painting, staffing park offices, planting, mulching, building displays at the Delaware State Fair, and even constructing stocks to be used at Dover's 18th Century Market Fair this fall, to name just a few. During an end of year celebration for their service, DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin and others thanked the participants for all of their hard work in state parks this summer.

"This job may not have always been easy, but the impact you have made this summer is far greater than you will ever know," said Secretary Garvin. "You have developed a stronger connection to the nature around you. We need you and the environmentally-based knowledge and abilities you have learned this summer. You have made a major difference and our collective hats are off to you. We could not have had such a successful summer season without you, and celebrating you is a small thanks for all you have done."

The YCC fosters an interest in nature-related career paths, and figures bear this out. Before the program, 68.9 percent of this year's YCC members were interested in environmental science or natural resource management. Following the program, 80 percent have indicated that they are interested in those careers.

DNREC's Delaware State Parks YCC program provides high quality

summer jobs and environmental opportunities for young people aged 16-21. Corps members conduct meaningful environmental and park-focused activities as a means of achieving personal growth. Through service, participants gain skills, confidence, and see first-hand the benefit their hard work makes in providing a lasting benefit for public lands and communities. YCC is committed to engaging young people in important conservation and park projects while providing learning that fosters teamwork, self-esteem, social responsibility and respect for the environment.

For more information on the YCC, contact Ashleigh McKinney, program manager,

DNREC's Delaware State Parks Youth Conservation Corps, 302-538-1732, or visit: <http://www.destateparks.com/ycc>.

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